



PETER COURTNEY
President of the Senate

Senate Committee on Judiciary
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Senator Kim Thatcher, Vice-Chair
Senator Michael Dembrow
Senator Dennis Linthicum
Senator James Manning Jr.

TESTIMONY BY SENATOR PETER COURTNEY
SB 1050
APRIL 12, 2017

Chair Prozanski, members of the Committee, thank you for hearing my testimony today.

My name is Peter Courtney. I am a State Senator. I live in NE Salem.

I am here to testify in support of SB 1050.

I've come before this Committee on this topic before. Some of you probably remember SB 1517 from the 2014 session. Then came SB 2 in 2015. Neither of those bills passed out of this Committee. I hope that SB 1050 can be different.

I introduced this bill, and the two previous bills, because I am very concerned about predatory sex offenders. Now, I am told that that term is outdated, but I think you know the type of individual I mean when I use that term.

This type of criminal has haunted me for years – since I served on Governor Barbara Roberts’ task force regarding sex abuse crimes. Hearing about these heinous crimes – many committed against children – really messed me up.

In the past, there have been some concerns about the legal implications of my sex offender bills. People were concerned that they went too far. While I don’t necessarily agree with that, this year my staff has worked hard to craft a bill that we believe everyone will be able to support.

Here is what the bill does:

If a person is convicted of:

- Rape in the first degree under ORS 163.375;
- Sodomy in the first degree under ORS 163.405; or
- Unlawful sexual penetration in the first degree under ORS 163.411

And, at the time of the offence, has a prior conviction for:

- Rape in the first degree under ORS 163.375;
- Sodomy in the first degree under ORS 163.405;
- Unlawful sexual penetration in the first degree under ORS 163.411;
- An equivalent federal offense; or
- An equivalent offense in another state

Then, the presumptive sentence is life imprisonment without the possibility of release or parole.

There are carve outs in the bill for courts to impose a different sentence under the rules of the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission based on substantial and compelling findings.

This bill will finally get at protecting our community from the most dangerous of sexual criminals. I hope you can join me in supporting it.

Thank you, Chair Prozanski and distinguished members of the committee, for hearing SB 1050.

I leave it to your individual and collective wisdom to decide how to proceed with this matter.

I will entertain any questions, comments, or criticisms.